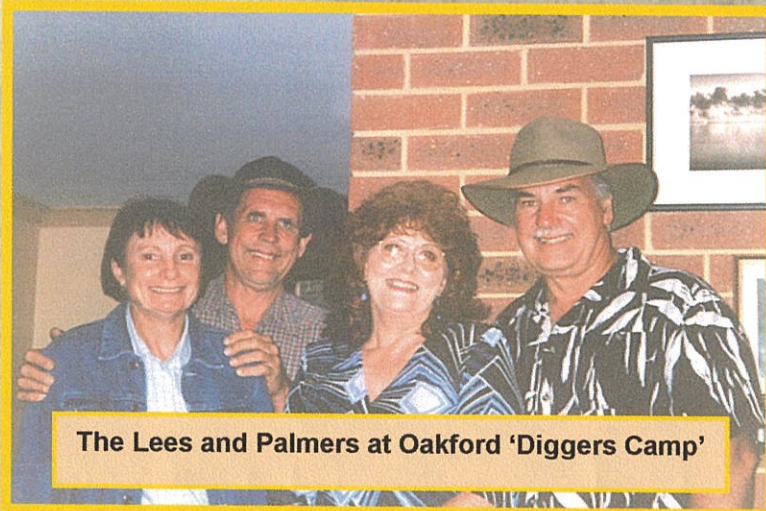


\$2.50

WA Bush Poets & Yarn Spinners



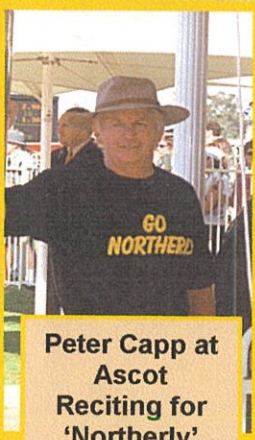
Newsletter : December 2002



The Lees and Palmers at Oakford 'Diggers Camp'



Glenny Palmer at The Raffles



Peter Capp at Ascot Reciting for 'Northerly' Exhibition Gallop

Poetic Fun in November

Join us in December for the Final Heats before Wireless Hill

"Come All Ye" at the Raffles Hotel
cnr Canning Highway and Canning Beach Rd Applecross
(Upstairs in The River Room)



Ron Evans reciting at Boyup Brook

Next Meeting Friday 6/12/2002 at 7:30pm



Lorelie's Letters



The November heat with Bill McAtee and Gary Crier judging went off very well with a high calibre of presentation. The judges will be consolidating their scores and announcing the category winners at the end of the December heat.

Plans are well in hand for the Australia Day Championship at Wireless Hill, Ardross at 1.30 p.m. on Sunday 26th January. If members have books, tapes etc. to sell, bring them along for the Product Table. The Rotary Clubs will be providing sausage sizzle breakfast, lunch, coffee, etc. all day, which is a great convenience for us. It was very popular last year.

Rusty (9364.4491) would like to hear from anyone or any firm who has items or goods of an Australian nature to display, to make it more of an 'Australian Day'. He has in mind Aussie hats, Slip, Slop, Slap, Greening Australia and things like that. It will all add to the interest of the big day.

Competitors for the December heat who have so far registered are John Hayes, Ron Evans, Kerry Lee, Rod Lee, Syd Hopkinson, Peter Williamson, Peter Nettleton, Ron Ingham, Beth Scott and Rusty Christensen. (Where are all the women?) Geoff Bebb will be the M.C. We are happy to have Geoff and Michelle back with us after a successful sojourn overseas.

Yes, there will be a COME ALL YE on Friday 3rd January. Successful candidates will be able to have a little practice with an audience and others can join in to have a "first night". Remember that items should not be longer than seven minutes for competition and not much longer on COME ALL YE nights.

I am sure you will all enjoy the coming competition season of Australian Poetry and Yarns.

Lorelie.



Michelle's Musings

Dear members,

Hello again from wonderful sunny Australia. (Paradoxically, looking at the weather news I wish it would rain in the right places and at the right time for those poor farmers out there.) However, it's good to be back.

There certainly have been some interesting activities with the Bush Poets in the last few months. I hope you have enjoyed the first heat of the Wireless Hill Challenge. I'm looking forward to the 2nd as I have not heard much bush poetry lately.

This issue I have featured the Lee's tremendous efforts towards "Farm Hand" and the visit by Glenny Palmer from Queensland. It's great to see such movements of poets across the country in both directions to resurrect Bush Poetry and Australia's Heritage through that medium. Peter's 'thesis' is also there to remind us of this heritage.

We know the WABP can put on a top show not only at the Raffles but in many other places in the state. Small country towns are now also joining in the efforts to be heard and seen. For instance I saw in the newspapers last week that even the tiny town of Menzies is joining in the Arts push with a controversial sculpture exhibition. The Year of the Outback has sparked all sorts of innovative ideas in the most remote places. Thank you for doing your bit by bringing *your* poems and ideas to our newsletter. Take up the challenge and write even more.

WA is accessible to adventurous Campervanners (and Caravanners dare I say!) from all over Australia; it does not take an expensive plane ticket to get here. People like Rod and Kerry; places like Menzies and Yealering and even Hall's Creek now have something to offer that was not there a couple of years ago and it often features Bush Poetry.

In short, I love travelling overseas but I love home too and am glad that it is providing some great entertainment.

Have a peaceful Christmas and a safe, Happy New Year 2003

**Cheers,
Michelle**

November was the first night of the heats for our Championships on Australia Day. Brendan Parker did a great job of MC on the night. He always has a few rib ticklers up his sleeve.

The night started with a tribute to Bobby Miller who passed away after a long illness. This is a sad loss to poets and poetry fans. Apart from being a brilliant poet with a diverse repertoire he was one of the co-founders of the Australian Bush Poet's Association and was fondly known as "The Larrikin". Rod performed Bobby's funny "The Burglar" and Rusty did the nostalgic "What Waltzing Matilda Means to Me".

The heats were well supported in most sections, the performers being Lea Mathews, Ron Ingham, Kerry Lee, Beth Scott, Stinger, Rusty, Peter Drayton & Rod Lee.

With the heats over Brendan tried to close the night at 9.30 but when no one seemed inclined to leave we had a short impromptu concert. A great night!

Rod and Kerry Lee

\$740 raised
for
'Farm Hand'

**Rod and Kerry's Bush Concert Weekend
And Diggers Camp
Featuring special guest Glennie Palmer**

The series of concerts actually started on Friday night at the Raffles with a packed house. As I only attended a small portion of the Saturday night performance I gathered 'intelligence' about the shows from a cross-section of attendees on the various nights including the Bush Breakfast. Val Read reported excitedly that she had taken a number of photos of Friday night and really enjoyed the fun show. When asked which was her preferred poem she retorted "All of them". To prove it Val bought \$45 worth of Glennie's tapes and books.

The *first* thing I noticed as I entered the Main Concert on Saturday was the enormous preparation that Rod and Kerry had done for this show. Their property was neatly cordoned off into proper car park bays, campervan areas, product and drinks area, complete with map and directions. The place was a picture. The second thing I noticed; seeing Rod and Kerry for the first time in three months was that they were very excited about the show but also extremely tired. Perhaps they needed more helpers ?

Upon meeting **Glennie** and her husband **Allan** I was immediately struck by their exuberance and friendliness. Glennie and her fiery hair is certainly a lady of high energy and fun. The book I bought of her poetry certainly added to that impression. I heard **Allan** did some very funny recitations later, despite the nerves. What a poetic family.

The first up on stage apart from **Rod** as MC was **Dave Lee** on guitar and partner **Diane Lister** on flute. They made a super duo: wafting melodies, great voice and sensitive lyrics about Australia for Australians. Hooray! Another John Williams in the making. After that we met another of the younger set **Andrew Horabin**: his songs were harder hitting, with very clever lyrics depicting some of the dilemmas and absurdities of our modern times (well suited to uni. students and the broadminded). That is when I had to head off so the rest of the impressions of the night come from Kerry and Rod and the audience themselves.

Weekend at Digger's Camp - by Rod & Kerry Lee.

This turned into a very busy, exciting weekend heavily supported by the nomads from the Motor Home and Campervan Club. They started moving in on the Friday and some are still in residence on our property. They are such lovely, happy people we might adopt them.

Approximately 240 attended the Saturday night concert. The beautiful weather certainly helped to make the weekend a success as did the the welcome help from friends and family and \$740.00 was raised for Farm Hand. Thanks to all those who supported us.

Early evening we were treated to an amazing performance of Natural Horsemanship by Susan Poole which was very well received. After a barbecue the main concert started. Glennie Palmer from Queensland was our main performer supported by David Lee, Andrew Horriban and Wersal. We diversified the type of entertainment with the aim of initiating the younger people into the joys of Bush Poetry. While this was successful we felt the poetry content suffered and future concerts will be more focussed towards family entertainment and Bush Poetry.

I'm glad Kerry mentioned the poetry content. I had a similar recommendation passed on from the audience to that effect. Next year *please* vet the material to be performed to match the audience; Many of whom were 50+ and others with young children. Despite this glitch I urge the audience here to continue their support of this budding major annual event. Ed.

However, Bush Poetry devotees were well catered for with the concert at the Raffles on Friday night and the Poet's Breakfast on Sunday morning. It was great sitting under the paperbarks in the early morning being entertained by Glennie, Lea, Arthur, Rod and myself as well as some of the campers, with background support from the birds and frogs. Thanks to all who helped make this a fantastic weekend.



Old Days, Old Ways Gone

Can you tell me what made the old days and old ways
disappear from when I was a kid,
when a codger could call every spade as a spade
and he wouldn't get fined twenty quid.

When a bloke could get blind and say what's on his mind
telling someone to go straight to buggery,
without risking detention and gross nervous tension
in a court up on charges of thuggery.

If you got in a blue it was 'tween him and you
and your mates would gather 'round cheering'
while the coppers they knew that it weren't nothing new
or a problem for folks to be fearing.

Yes, they knew that the fight would be over all right
that it wouldn't take more than a minute,
before you would make right while the rest of the blighters
found reason to get stuck back in it.

If you swallowed a fly in the baker's meat pie
he'd say, "Sorry.." and give you your dough back,
and it wasn't a sin to wolf whistle and grin
if a sheila's new dress had a low back.

If your missus took off with a fine city toff
it was well up to him to support her,
but in this day and age she'll take off with your wage
and your horse and your daughter.

You could work at a job and pick up a few bob
that was extra from helping your neighbour,
and the union was there saying that's pretty fair
after all it was your sweat and labour.

But your pay now they'll dock it, 'cause they're in the pocket
of pollied deserving a cage,
the taxation inspector will send an inspector
at three times the cost of your wage.

Oh! The fun that we had when the world wasn't mad
when we drank billy tea and ate damper,
and the yarns round the fire would reveal the best liar,
'twas a life that no man would dare hamper.

Yes I know what made the old days and old ways
so much better than things of today,
and I dream and I'll pine, as that old bugger Time
sweeps the last of my memories away.

© **Glenny Palmer**

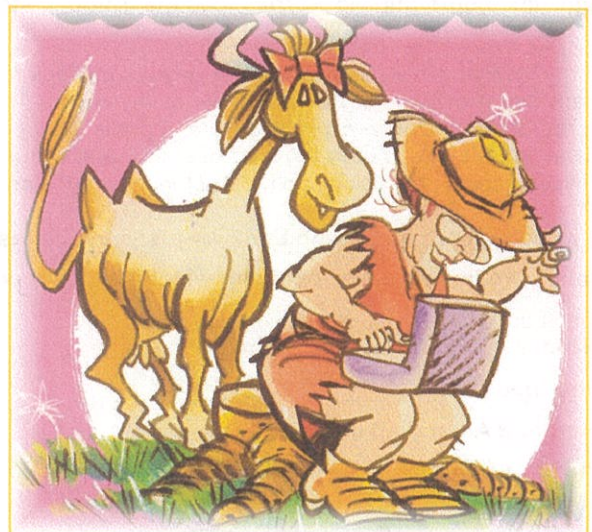


Now here's a challenge?

What do *you* readers and
poets feel about
'the good old days?'

(Perhaps you could write in
a reply or better still pen a
poem
For the newsletter.)

Michelle



Book Illustration by Graham Reese

This poem comes from Glenny's 1998 Book of Poems called "Laughs Larrikins and Lovely Ladies"

In the book Glenny suggests that her first direct exposure to a true blue larrikin was on the day when she was born when her dad announced "If this kid's hair isn't blonde or red by Wednesday, I'll be having a serious talk to the milkman!" He was the inspiration for this poem.

Editor

Ever Had A Dog's Eye and Dead 'Orse (Deconstructing "I'll Have Chips" by Jim Haynes)

(Article from Peter 'Stinger' Nettleton)

One of the stated objects of the WA Bush Poets & Yarnspinners Association Inc is "to conserve and maintain the Australian Idiom". When these objects were being drafted, some members of the steering committee wanted to be more specific and talk about active resistance against the loss of the Aussie vernacular. It wasn't the creeping insidiousness of globalisation as it applied to our language that was the issue however – it was pure and simple paranoia about the Americanisation of our culture in general, particularly via our youth.

I should declare at this point that I was one of that committee and felt strongly that the paranoia was justified. I thought stand-up poet Jim Haynes was close to my own position on the matter when I read his 1994 - published poem "I'll Have Chips". The title is of course a retort to those who would ask "do you want fries with that?".

In his prologue to the poem, Haynes says:

"Growing up in Australia I learned to respect other people's cultures...My American friends who visit Australia are horrified at the way we are being swamped by the worst aspects of their society. I wonder why more Aussies don't seem to notice, or care?"

To some extent I think we at the WABPYA felt that we were the sheriffs – sorry, the lifesavers of the dinkum Aussie lingo – sorry, spoken word. We set out not only to have a monthly get-together in a suburban pub to amuse and impress each other with our ability to recite puerile poetry and spin silly stories or yarns. We also wanted to be a posse – sorry, a lobby group, to convince our youth that we had a wonderfully rich and colourful culture and tongue of our own, so there was really no need to go borrowing from Northern America. 7 years down the track, my views have mellowed somewhat.

In the 1960s, a Melbourne Architect named Robin Boyd wrote a book called 'The Australian Ugliness'ⁱⁱⁱ in which he coined the name 'Austerica', to describe the worst influences of the USA on the Australian streetscape in particular but culture in general. Boyd did this from much the same patriotic standpoint as (and would no doubt have agreed with) Haynes when in the 1990s he wrote:

**"We're a funny mob, we fought, to keep invaders from our shore,
And whinged about the migrants, and tried to shut the door,
On people who were happy to come and live with us,
To adapt and share our lifestyle, and then we make NO fuss
When a foreign culture comes along that's pretty second rate
And wipes ours out! No worries, call me 'Dude' instead of 'Mate'**

In my view however, both Boyd and Haynes mistook for cultural imperialism what was (and is) really no more than successful marketing. Post-war Australia was a wealthy country, hungry for those luxuries of life that seemed to be sourced primarily from North America. Our own 1960s adverting gurus (which included such latter-day Aussie literary icons as Philip Adams and Peter Carey) were quick to obey the laws of supply and demand, leaving the cultural cops of the day standing somewhat flat-footed. Haynes goes on to stick it into the Austericans (such as those who give our sporting teams yankee names) with

**"I wonder about those who think we just can't be respected,
Unless we imitate a way of life, to which we're not connected"**

and addressing them directly by:

"From every parent, teacher and poet,

Who tried to show a kid,

Our great Australian heritage,

Thanks a lot for what you did!"

(This is meant sarcastically, by the way). It is here that Haynes reveals that he too is a victim of the paranoia about our youth being indoctrinated. But is there really anything to worry about? Are our young people really heading down a one-way trail to Austerica?

Growing up in the 1950s and 1960s, my parents jived to Bing Crosby and Cranky Frankie. At family singalongs, my cousins pounded out everything from Jolson to Sedaka on the pianola. My boyhood heroes were mostly movie and TV cowboys, until I discovered The Beatles. I once thought of Ned Kelly as an Aussie Jesse James, the Light Horsemen as our version of the 7th Cavalry and so on. Somehow though, I got over it eventually.

Globalisation of culture has its good points, which perhaps aren't readily apparent. While it does mean we tend to be swamped with commercial crap from elsewhere, through the magic of the internet, we also have a unique opportunity to experience other rich cultures, such as those of Africa and our Asian neighbours. It also creates the opportunity for others to learn more about our culture,

as evidenced by the growing tide of culture tourists and exchange students, enthusiastically enrolling in courses in Australian history and literature. And far from dying out as predicted by Alan Seymour, Eric Bogle and others, the Anzac tradition is today stronger than ever, particularly among our youth.

The role of bush poetry in Australian culture is not insignificant. The original 'Bush Poets', those who wrote for the Bulletin during the late 19th early 20th century, had a lot to do with the creation of the Australian Image - that myth we cling to as a way of defining our national identity. It is important that we realise however that bush poetry is a living art form and as such must continually absorb influences from its surroundings, whether positive or negative, recycling them and reconstructing itself accordingly.

As bush poets then, I believe we have an ongoing function in the overall cultural structure, as both educators and marketers. At every opportunity, we should engage with not only our own youth, but also the outside world and deliver the message that Australia has its own rich culture that helps us identify where we came from to reach who we are today and why. This needs to be linked to an open invitation to others to engage with us as well. Maybe we should look at our packaging from time to time but on the whole, we need not be too concerned about our product. In short, I say think global – act local!
And anyway, aren't chips the Pommy National dish?

ⁱ Haynes, Jim *I'll Have Chips!* Singabout Australia, Sydney 1994

ⁱⁱ Boyd, Robin *The Australian Ugliness*, Cheshire, Melbourne 1960

For "The Year of the Outback 2002"

(Every Outback outcamp should have one)

OUR BUSH DUNNY

(instructions for the uninitiated)

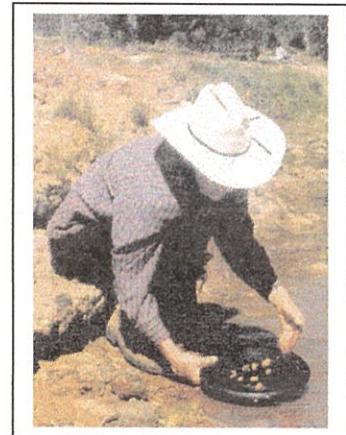
A lap of tarp 'round a slender gum,
A bit of bush handiwork and the rustiest drum.
No mirror nor marble in this humble amenity.
No noxious concoctions or vandal's obscenity.
Just the bush, the birds and the breeze,
The shade and the eucalypt trees.

So when you tire of the greenery,
Can't stand the scenery,
Don't reach for the button
Like civilized mutton,
Or take off at a run
When the paperwork's done.

Pick up the tin
and pour some sand in!
No hurry, no haste,
No water to waste
Except for the wee.

Last but not least please close down the lid.
The possums at night might be glad that you did.
Better by far than the other types are.
No treatment plant needed nor poisonous potions.
No overflow here to pump to the ocean.

By Mary McGregor-Craigie



This little poem was passed on to me by Mary who is one of our members from the country.

The timing was opportune as another funny little 'dunny' story came out of Rod and Kerry's 'Digger's Camp' last week.

A certain portable dunny company who shall remain nameless went to pick up their portaloo left on the Lee's property to cope with the crush of 240 people + over a week. (One campervan stayed for an extra week to enjoy the serenity and hospitality on the Lee's selection.)

Anyhow back to the portaloo. A huge pick up with full rig for decanting turned up one afternoon and they got bogged on the property. It took them till 7 pm that night to dig themselves out as the Lee's tractor and landrover was unable to shift the heavy vehicle. They should have taken Mary's advice eh!

PPS. People leave funny things behind on camping trips (apart from the loo). A lady left her knickers behind. I'm sure Kerry is looking after them. Any one going to own up to this one?

Harvey Dickson's Boyup Brook – October 26/27



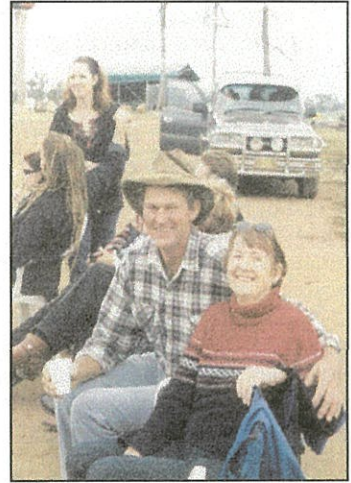
Phyllis Tobin sent in these pictures and article about her trip to Boyup Brook.

"The Opening and first rodeo at the new arena attracted a huge crowd on the Saturday and on Sunday morning a smaller 'crowd' enjoyed a Bush Poet's Breakfast, featuring our own **Ron Evans**(live!) and **Brian Gale**.

Ted Egan (all the way from Alice Springs) entertained us in his own inimitable style – 'Victorphone' and all.

Peter ? From Bunbury gave a very lively polished performance of riding 'Turbulence' at 30,00 feet, amongst other items. This is a performer we should try to get to a Come All Ye!"

Phyllis Tobin



Thanks for the article Phyllis. Great to see Ron again as well. Peter wherever you are, come and join the crazy poets at the Raffles (We'll get your surname then) and have some fun up in Perth too.

2nd Heat of Wireless Hill - reminder

People wishing to enter the Restricted Competition for Wireless Hill need to be financial members.

Committee Changes

Please note that we have had a change of secretary. Peter Williamson has resigned due to work pressures Joan Macdonald has stepped in the breach. Thank you Joan. Joan also has a new email address and phone number

Committee Contacts 2002-2003

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Constance Herbert	Unit 6, 5 Crabtree Mews	O'Connor WA 6163	Committee	9331 2321	

SANTA CLAUS

Halt! Who goes there? The sentry's call
Rose on the midnight air
Above the noises of the camp,
The roll of wheels, the horses' tramp.
The challenge echoed over all —
Halt! Who goes there?

A quaint old figure clothed in white,
He bore a staff of pine,
An ivy wreath was on his head.
"Advance, oh friend," the sentry said,
"Advance, for this is Christmas night,
And give the countersign."

"No sign nor countersign have I,
Through many lands I roam
The whole world over far and wide,
To exiles all at Christmastide,
From those who love them tenderly
I bring a thought of home.

"From English brook and Scottish burn,
From cold Canadian snows,
From those far lands ye hold most dear
I bring you all a greeting here,
A frond of a New Zealand fern,
A bloom of English rose.

"From faithful wife and loving lass
I bring a wish divine,
For Christmas blessings on your head."

"I wish you well," the sentry said,
"But here, alas! you may not pass
Without the countersign."

He vanished — and the sentry's tramp
Re-echoed down the line.

It was not till the morning light
The soldiers knew that in the night
Old Santa Claus had come to camp
Without the countersign.

Written 24 December 1899:
published the *Sydney Mail*, 24 December 1900

By A.B. Banjo Paterson

**The Members of the Editorial Sub-Committee
Would like to thank all those,
who contributed to this Edition of The Newsletter.**

**Without their support and enthusiasm,
a Newsletter like this would not be possible.**

Many Thanks

The Editor

WA Bush Poets and Yarn Spinners Association Inc

Coming Events

Date	Event	Co-ordinator
Fri. 6 th December. 2002	Heat 2 of Wireless Hill Challenge	Lorelie Tacoma – 9310 1500
Fri 3 rd January 2003	CAY First for the year	TBA
Sun 26 th January 2003	Wireless Hill Challenge	Lorelie Tacoma – 9310 1500

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